

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 302627

FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 10830 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN CAIRO
DAMASCUS JIDDA JERUSALEM DEC 19

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 10830

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, IS
SUBJ: DISAGREEMENT WITH BEGIN PLAN GROWS IN HERUT

REF: TEL AVIV 10768

1. PRESS COMMENTATORS AND POLITICAL CIRCLES ARE FOCUSING
TODAY ON CONTINUING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HERUT
MEMBERS AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN REGARDING HIS PROPOSALS
FOR THE FUTURE OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. (THERE ARE
SIMILAR, BUT LESS TROUBLING, DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BEGIN AND
THE COMPLETE LAND OF ISRAEL MOVEMENT.) THE HERUT MEMBERS
WHO ARE MOST ACTIVE IN EXPRESSING THEIR CONCERNS ARE: KNESSET
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN MOSHE ARENS
AND MKS GEULAH COHEN AND DOV SHILANSKI. A MEETING OF THE
HERUT CENTRAL COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD THURSDAY EVENING AND
BEGIN'S PLAN WILL PROBABLY BE QUESTIONED AND CRITICIZED;
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IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER BEGIN HIMSELF WILL BE PRE-
SENT BUT HIS PLAN WILL IN ANY CASE NOT HAVE AN EASY
TIME.

2. ACCORDING TO SOURCES WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED
THESE DIFFERENCES, THERE ARE MANY HERUTNIKS WHO FEEL
VERY STRONGLY ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING. MANY OF THEM FIND

IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT BEGIN HAS ACTUALLY SAID SOME OF THE THINGS THEY SEE ATTRIBUTED TO HIM IN THE PRESS AND THEY WANT TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM HIM AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT LED HIM TO TAKE THE PRESENT INITIATIVES. THEY ANTICIPATE THAT BEGIN'S PRIME DEFENSE WILL BE THAT A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE IS IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO REQUIRE GIVING WAY ON SOME POINTS OF IDEOLOGY. THEY ALSO ANTICIPATE HE WILL ARGUE THAT THE WEST BANK MAY NOT BE UNDER ISRAEL SOVEREIGNTY BUT NEITHER WILL IT BE UNDER THE SOV-EREIGNTY OF ANY OTHER NATION.

3. IN RESPONSE, THE HERUTNIKS WILL SAY TO BEGIN THAT SINCE THEE LIKUD TOOK OVER IN MAY, NOTHING HAS HAPPENED AS THEY HAD EXPECTED. BEGIN HAD ALWAYS REFERRED TO JUDEA AND SAMARIA AS PART OF THE INTEGRAL TERRITORY OF ISRAEL AND THEY WONDER HOW HE CAN NOW PROPOSE A PLAN WHICH RELINQUISHES ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY OF THOSE AREAS. THEY ALSO NOTE THAT THE PLAN IS ESSENTIALLY A BEGINNING POINT FOR NEGOTIATIONS (THEY POINT OUT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER REFERRED TO IT THAT WAY) AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS MAY FIND BEGIN HAVING GIVEN AWAY EVEN MORE.

4. OUR JUDGMENT IS THAT THESE DIFFERENCES HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE POINT OF A PARTY REVOLT AND WILL LIKELY NOT REACH THAT POINT. BEGIN WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO PREVAIL UPON HIS PEOPLE AND, IN FACT, MAY BE STRENGTHENED BY THIS PUBLIC DISPLAY OF OPPOSITION. FOR EXAMPLE, CHEN IS PUBLICLY REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE HERUT MEETING WAS TO CONFIDENTIAL

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STRENGTHEN BEGIN'S HAND IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH LIE AHEAD WITH EGYPT. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER AS LINES OF DISSENSION BECOME CLEAR. VIETS. UNQUOTE VANCE

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